

## ALCOHOLISM

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## Exercise as Respiratory Therapy

THERE WAS A TREND (I hope it has been reversed) to tell patients with chronic respiratory disease to take it easy. . . . Respiratory cripples give up too soon, become inactive, become depressed, lose their self-image; and a tremendous vicious cycle is begun. They do this sometimes in the mistaken belief that if they simply do not strain their lungs and their hearts they will live longer. Then they really deteriorate and participate in their own downhill slide.

There is no question that you can train people with respiratory insufficiency to exercise more and be more comfortable. The mere act of exercise is not that important; what is important is translating this improved capability into activities of daily living. How that is translated into the patient's own life-style varies tremendously. But I have patients today who have continued to exercise and walk miles a day, after being housebound, because they love it. On the other hand, I have patients for whom exercise does not have much meaning. It is possible to train people; they can become more efficient physically and if this is useful for patients, then it is highly worthwhile.

—THOMAS L. PETTY, MD, *Denver*

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